



LUND UNIVERSITY
Humanities and Theology

Life as a Spare Part:
Brainwashing and Power in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never
Let Me Go* and Jodi Picoult's *My Sister's Keeper*

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ENGK01

Degree essay in English Literature

Spring semester 2013

Centre for Languages and Literature

Lund University

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Abstract

In the bestselling novels *My Sister's Keeper* by Jodi Picoult and *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro two stories are told about what it is like to grow up being organ donors to others and never having much to say about one's own life. In this essay the lack of free will the two protagonists face in their lives is to be explored and also how people can force others into actions they do not want to perform. This essay will illustrate that as a result of being forced into organ donations the protagonists have no free will. Moreover, it will display how they have been brainwashed by people with power into the assumption that they have no other choice but to go along with the donations.

Keywords: Brainwashing, Freedom, Free will, Power, Organ donation

Words: 128

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Introduction

From the onset, the two protagonists Anna Fitzgerald in Jodi Picoult's 2004 novel *My Sister's Keeper* and Kathy H. in Kazuo Ishiguro's 2005 novel *Never Let Me Go* are children who at first sight seem to be living typical lives. However, something separates them from others their age, which is that they were both born as organ donors to other people. They have never had the freedom of choosing the outcome of their lives themselves; instead, they have to do what others decide for them. From the moment they were born they have had one purpose only, which is to give up bits and pieces of their bodies and organs. Neither has any control over what is to happen in their respective futures. These novels are evidence of the fact that not everyone has the freedom to live a life they have chosen themselves. Organ donations and the subsequent lack of freedom as a result of the disempowerment by others is the common theme that can be seen throughout the stories. The lack of free will which both Anna and Kathy face is what brings them together, even though their lives differ on some levels.

Never Let Me Go tells a story about 31-year-old Kathy, who recalls her childhood and the many difficulties in it. Kathy, like so many others in her world, was cloned to offer spare parts for those in need of new organs. She, along with her friends, lived in a school for many years being taught by teachers, who assist in the nurturing of their bodies as donors as a way to prepare them for their upcoming donations which would continue until they completed. The term 'complete' is used in the same sense as dying, so when they talk about someone completing, it indicates that that person has died. They are always told that this is the sum of their lives and they have no other choice but to go along with it. They have no free will and they have never been given the chance to see how their lives could be if they had a chance to make their own choices.

Like Kathy, Anna in *My Sister's Keeper* was born for a specific reason which is to help her sister, who is diagnosed with leukemia, survive by giving her everything from her blood to her kidney. For Anna, the donations started before she had learnt to speak, and even at the age of 13, she has never had a voice of her own or her own opinion, at least not one that matters to her parents. It has never been enough for her to say no to her parents since her sister's sickness triumphs over her free will and her freedom to make her own decisions.

This essay will argue that neither Anna nor Kathy has any free will in regards to the decision of donating organs and it will demonstrate how the power of being brainwashed and controlled by others can shape a person's life and subtract their free will. It will raise the question as to why Kathy and her friends do not escape from the life they were brought up in and from the people controlling them and take charge of their own fate. It will provide examples of how Anna's longing for free will is not enough for her parents to let her make her own decisions as well as presenting how she has been robbed of her free will that would have enabled her to live her life under her own terms. Firstly, this essay will begin with a short description of theories surrounding brainwashing and power. Secondly, it will give examples from Anna's life and explore how these theories relate to it and then proceed with the same for Kathy. Lastly, a comparison will be presented between the protagonists and finally a conclusion of how they have no free will in regard to organ donation will be presented.

Brainwashing and Power

The concept of brainwashing was first put in print in the early 1950s in an article by the *Miami News*. The writer, Edward Hunter, translated the term from the Chinese word *hsi-nao*, which means 'to cleanse the mind' (Winn 1-4; Taylor 3-4; Lemov 65). The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines brainwashing as to some extent pressure or coerce someone into a belief. The concept of brainwashing has encountered some difficulties in terms of being analyzed; this is due to the fact that it has never been wholly accepted as a technical word or as a legitimate method (Winn 3-4). In spite of this, Robert Lifton, who has conducted several studies on the concept of controlling someone's mind, states that to ignore the power of brainwashing “would be to overlook one of our major problems of our era - that of the psychology and ethics of directed attempts at changing human beings ... the process which gave rise to the name is very much a reality” (4). Lifton hereby states that brainwashing should be a legitimate method and that it is possible to brainwash someone and this has been seen throughout history.

According to Denise Winn, how someone is brought up has a significant effect on the person they become. She argues that if a child is frequently told about its parents' values and is too young to question them, those beliefs will soon represent knowledge to the child (37). Psychologist Hans Toch has conducted several studies into the minds of

children and suggests that indoctrination takes place, consciously or unconsciously, in childrens' lives because they are too young to question what they are being told. A child wants the parents' love and affection and will thus act in a certain way so as to accommodate the parents' wishes, particularly if the parents show the child love when doing or saying something they approve of. This will lead the child to continue acting in a way the parents will approve of as a way to maintain the love and affection (37-38). As Winn points out, “[a] child comes to believe certain things because he doesn’t see anything else” (42). According to Kathleen Taylor, the person performing the brainwashing does not always do it in a malevolent manner; the brainwasher may not be conscious of what they are doing or may in fact believe that what they are trying to achieve will benefit the victim (10).

When performing brainwashing on someone they also take control over the person and as a result gain power over them. The word power comes from the Latin word *potere* which means 'to be able', and one definition of power is that claimed by Morriss which is “possession of control or command over others” (9-10). Other definitions of power are those stated in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which are the ability to affect someone strongly and the power to influence the behavior of someone. As claimed by Steven Lukes, the “basic common core to ... all talk of power is the notion that A in some way affects B” (30). Additionally, Morriss suggest that when “we do say that A has power over B ... we do so when A can get B to do a large number of things, not just one” (33). Lukes also states that one can only be coerced into doing something if one has other possibilities than that which is forced upon you. Meaning a person can only be coerced to do something if that person has the possibility to act in a different way and has a choice to act differently (96).

When discussing freedom, Morriss claims that “to be free is to be left alone to do what one can; it is to be uncoerced” (116) and that you are only under someone else's power when that someone prevents you from acting as you desire. In addition, he claims that this can only occur when that person physically prevents someone else from acting out their wish (117). The concept of freedom manifests itself in different ways depending on individual circumstances. Some form decision and choices which others may regard as the opposite of freedom. People gain freedom differently; some may achieve it by staying in a group that others would experience as a limitation. Kathleen

Taylor states that being part of a group can provide safety and comfort to its members in the sense that one will never feel alone or on the outside (42). Eileen Barker states that even though people outside the group view it as a cage, the members may gain freedom from the anxieties of anomie, which means lack of purpose or identity, in a larger society by remaining with the group. Another point that she makes is the idea that individuals belonging to a larger group may stay in it due to them not knowing anything else except for the world and the rules within the group (59).

The terms presented in this chapter will be used in the next section which revolves around Anna and Kathy along with examples of how the terms function within the novels.

The Life of Anna Fitzgerald

I was born for a very specific purpose. I wasn't the result of a cheap bottle of wine or a full moon or the heat of the moment. I was born because a scientist managed to hook up my mother's eggs with my father's sperm to create a specific combination of precious genetic material. (Picoult 7)

This introductory quote is extracted from the novel *My Sister's Keeper* where the protagonist Anna describes how she came to be. It demonstrates that she is well aware of how she was created and she understands the reason as to why she was born. The lack of free will Anna faces throughout her life started prior to her being born. When Sara Fitzgerald, Anna's mother, is nine months pregnant with Anna she is at a hair salon and is asked by a woman whether she is having a boy or a girl and if she and her husband have thought of a name. Upon receiving these questions Sara becomes conscious of the fact that she has not reflected on this child in any other way than what she will be able to do for her sister. It is clearly stated that Sara has not given any thought of Anna as an actual child but merely as Kate's savior. Sara admits to the reader that she has only one plan for this child and that is “for her to save her sister's life” (97-98) and nothing beyond that. Anna's life was already planned out for her even before she was born. Anna's lack of free will and the lack of freedom to make her own decisions have had some horrible impacts on her. It has gone so far as to her having difficulty sleeping and she explains that, “Lately, I have been having nightmares, where I'm cut into so many pieces that there isn't enough of me to be put back together” (13).

This description is a result of several procedures where she has been cut open and had needles stuck into her, procedures which she has not chosen or been asked to perform.

A parent's power over its child can be massive and a parent will always have a great deal of impact on the child's life and a child will want to please its parents. One of the main issues of this essay is what happens in *My Sister's Keeper* when Anna's will and her parents' wishes do not match. When the wishes Anna's mother has for Anna and Anna's own will do not agree, Sara is quick to utter her disappointment and she does not hesitate from being harsh. She goes as far as to blame Anna for her sister dying, exclaiming, "I have one child who's just signed her own sister's death sentence" (89). Anna says that she feels guilty for considering Kate a burden in her life; feelings that she hopes her sister has no knowledge of (375) and to hear her mother's declaration of her part in her sister's impending death does not help her with these feelings. Since a child yearns for the parents' approval, using the technique of guilt is one way for parents to uphold their power.

As Anna states, she loves her sister and "can't stand the thought of losing her" (55) and she wants nothing else than for her sister to live. Nevertheless, there is also a part of her that does not want to be her sister's donor anymore. She says that "a horrible piece of me ... sometimes wishes I was free" (375). She proclaims that it is a horrible part of her that wishes this, which indicates that Anna is split between wanting to live her life as a normal child and giving up this life to keep her sister alive. An additional quote which proves that Anna feels torn between living her life and saving Kate's is when she says that Kate's death "would be the worst thing that's ever happened to [her]... and also the best" (376). Anna's parents do little to help her feel better; they merely force her, by making her feel guilty, into helping Kate. As a way to satisfy her parents' wishes of her donating, Anna gives up her freedom and her own life in the process.

Furthermore, whilst going through the procedures of donating, Anna has her family to lean back on and seek comfort in. Nevertheless, when it comes to donating, having a family has made it difficult for Anna in the sense that it has made it somewhat harder for her in attempts to stand up for herself. As Hans Toch states; children wants the parents love and affection and will thus act a certain way as to please the parents (Winn 42). As a result, Anna acts upon her parents' wishes to satisfy them. Anna is well

aware that her family is counting on her to come through for Kate whenever she requires a donation. When Anna was young and was to undergo one of her procedures she has some hesitation. "What if I change my mind?" (229), Anna asks her mother and is given the answer; "You don't have to do this if you don't want to, but I know that Kate is counting on you. And daddy and me" (229). By telling Anna that her family is counting on her to go through with the donation, it puts severe pressure on her, to a point where she feels she cannot say no. And since Anna wants to please her parents, she does not want go against them. Anna's parents are not supportive of her feeling fear and uncertainty concerning the donations and by making her feel guilty because she does not want to donate, they uphold their power.

However, it is not merely by the power of guilt the Fitzgerald family is trying to control Anna. As Toch states; a way to get a child to do as one wishes one will reward them with gifts of some sort, with the aim to illustrate that they have acted in a satisfying way and have done something good (Winn 37-38). At one occasion, Anna is brought to the hospital to have bone marrow drawn from her hipbones, as Kate is in need of bone marrow. When the procedure is finished Anna has to be hospitalized for several days, and as a reward her father comes to the hospital and gives her a necklace, stating "I thought you deserved your own gift, since you were giving one to your sister" (229-31). Naturally, Anna is thrilled and understands that she has done rather well and when she does it anew she will be rewarded. It is also stated, from her older brother, Jesse, that whenever Anna donates something to Kate she is given gifts. He claims that their "parents would shower [Kate] with all kinds of cool shit whenever she had to have something done to her; and since Anna was usually involved, she got the same amazing presents too" (240). This exemplifies how Anna's parents have taught her that presents and donating go hand in hand and, as a result, Anna will associate presents with donations, which will lead her to believe that if she donates she will receive gifts. As Toch states; giving children presents will lead the child to continue acting in the way the parents want, as a way to maintain the love and affection, especially if the child is too young to make life-changing decisions of their own. (37-38).

Anna's parents have not only maintained their power over her by giving her gifts and by making her feel guilty, they have also done it by force. As stated before, Morriss claims that "A has power over B ... when A can get B to do a large number of things,

not just one” (33). This model of power works well with the Fitzgerald family since Sara and Brian Fitzgerald (A) have power over Anna (B) in the sense that they have, at least up till now, managed to get Anna to do as they have sought her to on several occasions. By pushing Anna to donate various things to her sister through telling her they all count on her and by the means of giving her gifts and even saying that by not donating her sister will die, they have maintained control and power over her for several years. When Anna was younger and gave blood to her sister she had to, on more than one occasion, be held down by force in order to get the needle in her arm (278). When her parents cannot convince Anna to donate, they convince her by force, thus maintaining their power.

Anna has never experienced much freedom in her life and one example of how Anna encounters this is apparent when she expresses her hope to go to a hockey camp. She has been practicing the sport, practicing as the goal keeper for some months, and is invited, all expenses paid, to go to a high-prestige hockey camp over the next summer. However, her mother says no, “[n]ot because [she is] afraid of what might happen to Anna there, but because [she is] afraid of what might happen to Kate while her sister is gone” (262- 63). Her mother knowingly dismisses Anna's wish and sets aside her dream of playing hockey due to her being afraid that Kate will relapse. Sara also explains that Anna cannot go because “If Kate survives this latest relapse, who knows how long it will be before another crisis happens? And when it does, [they] will need Anna - her blood, her stem cells, her tissue - right here” (263). As a result from going to great lengths to keep Kate alive, Sara, consciously or not, sacrifices Anna's life in the process. Another setback that will stand in the way of Anna's dream is if she undergoes the kidney donation. One of the long-term effects of donating a kidney is “a recommendation to refrain from activities where your lone remaining kidney might be damaged” (48), and since Anna will only have one kidney, the risk of that being damaged will be significant and would therefore put an end to her dream of playing hockey. It would not only keep her from playing hockey but from practicing any kind of sport and even in her everyday life she would have to be exceptionally careful not to injure her kidney. Anna is not permitted to act according to her desire, which shows that Anna is under her parents' power for the reason that they physically prevent her from performing the sport.

One of the reasons why Anna is so desperately trying to have her say in what happens to her is that she is tired of no one asking how she feels about it all and she is, as she says, “sick of being a guinea pig ... sick of nobody asking [her] how [she] feel[s] about all of this. [She is] sick, but ... never fucking sick enough for [her] family” (215). Anna's parents assume that she will donate and have never given her much chance to have her say on the topic. They have taught her since she was little that she is to donate whenever they tell her to. Up until now she has been too young to grasp the impacts the donations will have on her life. Now, being older, she has realized that it is not acceptable that her parents do not to ask her what she wants and she has come to realize that she should be able to make decisions regarding her own life. Anna is tired of being controlled by her parents who do not treat her like the thirteen-year-old she is.

To put an end to the seemingly never-ending control her parents have over her, Anna has made the decision to become medically emancipated by suing her parents for the rights to her own body (18). This will give her a chance of freedom and the ability to make her own decisions. When Anna serves her parents with the lawsuit they, especially Sara, have difficulties with accepting that Anna does not want to be a donor anymore. Sara goes as far as to state that it is merely a tantrum from Anna's side and that they are not to give into it (193). As a way to keep Anna from becoming emancipated Sara, a trained attorney, decides to fight her in court and seek to legally force Anna to give up her kidney. This means that if Sara and Brian win their case they will, by force and against Anna's will, harvest her kidney for the benefit of Kate. Both before as well as after she serves the lawsuit, Anna has repeatedly tried to tell them about her wish to stop, yet neither listens to her nor even wants to listen.

'You mean it's okay to stop?' [Anna asks] ... 'That's *exactly* what I mean', my mother says. 'If you want, I'll tell Kate,' [Anna] offer[s]. 'So you don't have to'. 'That's all right ... we can pretend it never happened' [Sara tells her] ... 'But...won't Kate ask why I'm not her donor anymore?' My mother goes very still. 'When I said stop, I meant the lawsuit' [Sara explains]. I shake my head hard, as much to give her an answer as to dislodge the knot of words tangled in my gut. 'My God, Anna' ... 'What have we done to deserve this?' (175-76)

Sara is not taking into consideration how Anna feels but only declares 'What have we done to deserve this?' as though it is Anna who has caused her sister's sickness and as if Anna does not care about her. Sara does not stop to think of the impact the donations have had on Anna's life or how it will affect Anna in the long run. She does not regard the pain and stress Anna is suffering. She merely considers what will come to pass if Anna does not donate, since she is aware of what will happen to Kate if she does not receive a kidney.

After making the decision to sue her parents, Anna hires a lawyer, Campbell Alexander to represent her. While talking to her lawyer, Anna tells him how she has tried to tell her parents that she does not want to be a donor anymore but that neither listens to her (20). When she talks with her mother about not being a donor she pays little attention to her since she does not want Anna to stop being a donor. When Anna started the lawsuit against her parents, a guardian ad litem, Julia, was assigned to the case. At one point, Julia asks Jesse about the process of deciding when Anna will donate to Kate, whereupon Jesse exclaims; "You make it sound like there's some process involved. Like there's actually a *choice*" (emphasis in original 188). It is clear that in the Fitzgerald family, Anna is supposed to do as she is told and donate each time Kate falls ill, and given that she has done it in the past, no one is prepared for her to suddenly stand up for herself and say no. Anna is not given the freedom to choose which procedures she will go through, but she is expected to endure them all.

The Life of Kathy H.

I won't be a carer any more come the end of the year, and though I've got a lot out of it, I have to admit I'll welcome the chance to rest—to stop and think and remember. (Ishiguro 37)

This introductory quote to the ensuing analysis of Kathy H. is an example of how Kathy has been told certain things in her life and has come to regard them as factual. She says that she is pleased that she will not be a carer anymore though not being a carer means that she will start her donations and ultimately complete. The term carer stands for someone who takes care of the donors after their donations to help them recover and prepare them for their upcoming donation. Before becoming a donor everyone receives

a chance to be a carer, some acts as carers longer than others depending on how well they perform.

The children in *Never Let Me Go* have been cloned from ordinary people and bred to become donors to those in need of an organ. Since they are all clones there is someone out there that has the same physical appearance as them. They are called 'possibles.' Finding their possibles could be a way for them to see how their future could have turned out had their lives not been predetermined to be organ donors. There is a belief among the donors that a possible is linked to how you are as a person. They believe that if your possible has a vocation within a certain area they have that gene in them, and could possibly have that profession themselves (137). Though, there is some dispute as to whether it is achievable to find their possibles. Some believe that they may not be looking for someone alive since the people they were cloned from could have been old and now dead, or babies and will therefore not be the same age as them. Subsequently there are those theories they strive to not talk about; that they were cloned from, as Ruth puts it, “trash, [j]unkies, prostitutes, winos, tramps, [c]onvicts” (164). When they talk about their possibles they imagine how their lives could have turned out, and so they do not want to learn that had they been able to make their own decisions in life they could have been the trash Ruth brings up. Living as their possibles live is not an option for them since their lives were planned in advance and as a result from living predetermined lives, none of them have any free will or the ability to fully live.

As Winn states, the power of being told certain things by people that have a great deal of influence over you will affect you as a child and what you are told when you are a child will become the core to your life (42). In *Never Let Me Go*, Kathy, as well as the other clones, all go along with the fact that they are brought up as donors and will never have a life they have chosen themselves. From the time when they were born they have lived in a school, surrounded with high fences, alongside their guardians who also serve as their teachers. Their sheltered lifestyles have not given them much insight into any other existence than that of their world. While living at Hailsham, where they are prepared for their lives as carers and ultimately donors, the teachers or guardians for a long time avoid telling them specifically what their purpose as organ donors is. On the other hand, it is stated that they, at some level, still know about it and there have been some insinuations regarding it. When they were eight they were shown video tapes, they

had discussions and were given advice as to how they should take care of themselves (36). Yet none of them fully understood the concept of what their task is:

'You're students. You're ... *special*. So keeping yourselves ... very healthy inside, that's much more important for each of you than it is for me.' She stopped again and looked at us in a strange way. Afterwards we discussed it, some of us were sure she was dying for someone to ask 'Why? Why is it so much worse for us?' But no one did ... We only needed to ask and Miss Lucy would have told us all kinds of things ... So why had we stayed silent that day? I suppose it was because even at that age - we were nine or ten - we knew just enough to make us wary of that whole territory. (emphasis in original 68-69)

This is a conversation that takes place after Miss Lucy, a guardian at Hailsham, has lectured the students about smoking. She indicates that due to their upcoming donations they cannot smoke since they need to stay healthy. The quote above illustrates how more or less all of the students know, or at least have some idea of what is to be required of them. Kathy expresses that at this stage they all know about the donations, at least enough to understand what is to be expected from them. Up until this point no guardian has directly told them, but as pointed out by Kathy they know that all they have to do is ask Miss Lucy and she will tell them. However, they are wary to do so. Kathy explains that they did not inquire Miss Lucy further about the donations because the topic, and the way that the guardians became awkward against them whenever they brought it up, embarrassed them and made them unnerved.

Although the students try to live as normal children, something that distinguishes them from others is that of family. The students at Hailsham have no blood relatives to rely on but the guardians at the school act as parents and consequently Kathy, along with the other students, become a family. Kathy has come to depend on the guardians and since they often hint about what their purpose in life is, it has become a fact for her, something she has grown up with and learned not to question. Though, as stated, the guardians are cautious not to tell the students too much. Nevertheless, everyone still knows about the donations and since no guardian has ever told them otherwise, they have learned to trust in what they know. While expressing her hesitation at telling the

students about their upcoming donations, Miss Lucy soon gives them a real answer to what their purpose in life is. When overhearing two boys discussing growing up and leaving for America to pursue acting careers, she cannot keep her knowledge to herself anymore and explains that, “Your lives are set out for you. You'll become adults. Then before you're old, even middle-age, you'll start to donate your vital organs. That's what each of you was created to do ... You were brought into this world for a purpose, and your futures ... have been decided” (80). Miss Lucy's belief is that they should have been told more about the donations than what they have, and she also states that they “[ha]ve been told and not told” (79), giving the impression that there is more for them to know than meets the eye. Caring about the children and going to the great lengths as to tell them about their futures will prove to be an immense mistake on Miss Lucy's behalf, as she is later fired due to her beliefs (261-62). This proves that the guardians do not want the students to know too much about their futures as a way to sustain their power over them. By leaving the students in the dark as long as possible, they will not ask too many questions and it will thereby be easier for the guardians to control them.

An additional example of how the students have been brainwashed into thinking that being a donor is their predetermined future is a statement coming from Ruth, one of Kathy's friends whom we get to know in the novel. As Ruth states, she was never a good carer and consequently she begins her donations early on. Whilst talking to Kathy and Tommy years after they have left Hailsham, Ruth explains that she was “a pretty decent carer. But five years felt enough ... [she] was pretty much ready when [she] became a donor. It felt all right. After all, it's what [they]'re *supposed* to be doing, isn't it?” (emphasis in original 223). Ruth says that she is all right with starting her donations, which will lead to her death, because that is what they were created for. They have all been told that this is what they are supposed to do and they have learned not to question it. They simply go along with something that will in due course kill them.

One of the questions in this essay is why Kathy never runs away from what has been decided for her. After leaving Hailsham there is no one keeping her from leaving the cottages, and she has access to a car and thus it would be easy for her to escape. This could be answered using the theories by Kathleen Taylor and Eileen Barker surrounding cults and groups. Their theories are that individuals continue with the group to feel a sense of security and comfort as well as staying in the group due to them not being

acquainted with anything else. As a consequence, they feel insecure about the world outside and do not have the courage to walk away from the group. In *Never Let Me Go* Kathy never tries to leave the school and never talks about running away. While living at Hailsham several stories are told surrounding students that have tried to escape or have simply managed to get through the fences due to curiosity about the world outside. One boy managed to get past the fences and was found hanging dead in a tree a while later with his hands and feet chopped off. Another story is that of a young girl who also managed to get beyond the fences (50). This has led the pupils to believe that the woods are dangerous and evil (50-51), and it has scared them to a point where they do not as much as consider running away, since they would have to go through the woods.

In spite of the guardians claiming that none of the stories have any truth to them, it has frightened Kathy as well as other students into not trying to break away from Hailsham. Another reason for them to not run away is that they have never learned how to conduct themselves around normal people or how to live independent lives; by staying in the group and not fleeing Kathy never has to feel or be alone because there will always be people similar to her around. A further cause as to why Kathy does not run away from Hailsham is the fact that she feels safe there. She explains that because of Miss Emily, who is their favorite guardian, they all feel secure and that it is thanks to her kindness and her presence in their lives that they feel this sense of security (39).

Although this essay argues that Kathy has no free will regarding decisions surrounding organ donation, she does admittedly have some, very limited, freedom when it comes to other decisions. She can, for example, borrow a car and go on minor trips. In addition she can, to some extent, choose if she wants to start her training earlier than needed. Before starting their donations the students are trained to become carers and they can decide to initiate this training earlier than required. Kathy has been a carer for over eleven years and since she has done a superb job she has been given the freedom to choose her donors. Not everyone is a carer for such long time; it all depends on how good of a job you do (3-4). Towards the end of the novel, a woman called Madame points out that the Hailsham students are lucky to have been given the life they have since not all clones have been given the opportunity to be schooled or make friends (261). This indicates that they have been given more freedom than other clones.

From the onset of *Never Let Me Go* and throughout the novel, Kathy's love for

Tommy, a former student at Hailsham, grows and though they come across several ups and downs they slowly realize they want to be together. Unfortunately, due to their future calling as donors they cannot be together for long before Tommy completes after one of his donations. Their predetermined life as organ donors prevent them from starting a life with one another and it deprives them of their wish for a future together.

Comparison Between Protagonists

The major factor that connects the respective protagonists to each other in the novels is that both their lives have been predetermined for them before they were born. They have both been created for specific purposes, which is something they have learned to live with. Neither was born out of love but to help other live by giving them their organs. Anna's future was decided when her sister became sick and her parents made the decision to genetically conceive a child. In *Never Let Me Go*, we learn that there have been clones before Kathy and there will more clones in the future which presents the conclusion that Kathy's life was decided years ago when the prospect of cloning people to function as donors was made a possibility. It is clearly stated by Miss Emily that the cloning of donors will continue as she says: "How can you ask a world that has come to regard cancer as curable, how can you ask such a world to put away that cure, to go back to the dark days?" (257). This proves that there are no plans to end the production of new clones, and the future ones will also live lives that have been predetermined, the same as Kathy does and they also will not have the freedom of deciding when to donate their organs.

Another connection between Anna and Kathy is their ability to decide whether to have children or not. Kathy has never been given the choice to have children since she was 'designed' to not be able to get pregnant. In fact all those who have been cloned into existence have had the ability of reproduction taken away since their obligation is not to reproduce but to help others live (72, 82). Kathy's freedom to make the decision whether to have children or not has been deprived of her due to her life being predetermined and that freedom, of choosing whether to have children or not, is now close to being taken away from Anna as well. Anna is fully aware of the risks of donating her kidney. When it comes to the operation, Anna learns that "[there is] a 1 in 3,000 chance of dying on the operating table ... And that doesn't even include the long-

term effects: ... a risk of complications with pregnancy” (48). As a result of donating her kidney, Anna may not be able to become pregnant, and if she does, she could risk suffering from complications. As a result of being forced to donate, Anna's parents may deprive her of the chances of carrying a child of her own as well as risking her life in the process. The chance of dying is 1 in 3,000 which is a somewhat low figure; nevertheless, the risk is there. The same risk of dying as Anna faces, Kathy faces as well, every time she undergoes a donation.

An additional factor the protagonists have in common is that they both want different lives than what has been decided and as Morriss declares “to be free ... is to be uncoerced” and someone only has power over you when that someone prevents you from acting out your wish (116). Anna yearns for the chance to live her life on her own terms and have the ability to make her own decisions while Kathy has come to terms with being a donor and never tries to object. Although, she wants to put it off to spend a few years with the love of her life, Tommy. Neither receives this chance as Anna passes away before she gets to live freely and Kathy and Tommy realize that the rumors of possibly delaying the donations if they are truly in love is just that, a rumor. They will never be given the chance to live their lives on their own terms and are not able to live as they wish. By following Morriss's theory about freedom, that someone is only free is one is left alone to do as one wishes, neither Anna nor Kathy has any when it comes to donating organs or live a life as they want to.

Furthermore, Anna and Kathy both have individuals in their lives that have power over them and have succeeded in persuading them to undergo numerous donations as a benefit for others. Although, when *Never Let Me Go* comes to an end Kathy is still a carer and has not begun her donations, she will in a few months. They do not receive a chance to live as they please, which is a further similarity between them. Another similarity is that of death. Although Kathy does not die in the end of the novel, as Anna does, she will not long after the novel ends, since she is soon to start her donations. The power people have had over them as well as their predetermined lives will in due course result in the death of both of them.

One of the main differences between the two protagonists is that of family. Anna lives with her parents and siblings while Kathy lives, at the early stages of her life, with other clones and their guardians/teachers. After that she lives for some time in cottages

alongside other clones and ultimately she spends her life alone as a carer before starting her donations. Living in cottages is something all donors do before starting their training. It is not only Hailsham students that live there but other clones as well. When Kathy dies there will be no immense funeral or mourning process as there will be with Anna, since she has a family. Also, Anna knows her donor as opposed to Kathy, which is something that separates them further. Anna donates merely to her sister while Kathy is expected to donate to various unknown people. This aspect has a great impact on Anna's decision to walk away from her forced duties since it will kill her sister while Kathy should be able to walk away relatively easy since she does not suffer any vast loss if the people in need of organs die.

Throughout her life, Kathy has been seen as inhuman by those who are not clones. Instead of the word 'die', the word 'complete' is used to describe the termination of a clone's life. When one talks about completing something, it has the same meaning as having finished a certain thing and made it complete. For Kathy, this indicates that she has finished her life; she has completed her task as a donor and will now die. To say that they have 'completed' gives the impression that they were never real human beings. It is stated by Miss Emily that people are under the pretence that the clones are inhuman and that the only reason why Hailsham was built was with the intention to establish that the clones did in fact have souls and feelings as normal humans have. However, it is stated that others in the society ignores the evidence of their existing souls because they did not want to know that the individuals being forced into donations for others well-being are in fact as human as them (255). If one is to go by Miss Emily's beliefs, Kathy is of the same kind as Anna, human.

Conclusion

The aim of this essay has been to prove that the protagonists in *My Sister's Keeper* and *Never Let Me Go* have no free will by using the concepts of brainwashing and power. By applying these concepts in the analysis, this essay proves that neither Anna nor Kathy has any free will or the power to make their own choices. They have, throughout their childhoods and their lives, been under someone else's power, which has contributed to them not being able to decide the life changing-decision of their lives, such as donating their organs, for themselves.

In *My Sister's Keeper*, Anna Fitzgerald makes the decision to stand up for herself and take control of her life by suing her parents for the rights of her own body. She makes this choice after she is told by her parents that she is to donate one of her kidneys to her sister. She struggles to break free from the power her parents have over her as well as to not succumb to the brainwashing they use on her. This proves to be difficult since she not only has to battle her parents in court, but with her own conscious of letting her sister die as well. Throughout the novel she has been brainwashed by her parents through the power of being rewarded when she undergoes a donation and her parents have also forced her into donating by the power of guilt and by holding her down by force.

In *Never Let Me Go*, Kathy H. has not grown up under the same circumstances as Anna, Kathy's purpose in life has always been to give up her organs to strangers until she completes. Anna, on the other hand, only donates to her sister. She has grown up at the school Hailsham alongside other clones. As a result of being sheltered from the world outside and by not having received any knowledge about any other life, Kathy never tries to alter her destiny as she goes along with what has been chosen for her. The school has managed to maintain their power over the students by means of not fully explaining to them what it is they were created for. They have made them feel safe at Hailsham and sheltered from the world outside to keep them from running away.

Both Anna and Kathy express a wish for living different lives but are kept from living the lives they yearn for. Anna is, for example, not permitted to play hockey and Kathy is prevented from being with Tommy. This is all due to their lives being predetermined by the past and as a consequence they have no or limited free will. Neither of them has ever had the possibility to decide the outcome of their lives, as they were both brought to a world that, for them, has been determined by other people before they were born. They were born for one purpose only, organ donation, not to live as they themselves desire and this will in the end lead to their deaths.

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